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Councillors as Portfolio Spokespersons - Council Policy

Effective Date	<i>Post-Election Meeting of Council - 27 April 2020</i>
Policy Owner	<i>Customer Support and Governance Manager</i>
Link to Corporate Plan	<i>Strong Economic Growth Active Vibrant Communities Great Liveability Financial Sustainability</i>
Review Date	<i>April 2024</i>
Related Legislation	<i>Local Government Act 2009 Local Government Regulation 2012</i>
Related Documents	<i>Acceptable Request Guidelines - Council Policy Media Relations Policy - Council Policy</i>

Policy Version	Approval Date	Adopted/Approved
1	7 May 2008	Ordinary Meeting of Council
2	22 February 2012	Ordinary Meeting of Council
3	18 December 2013	Ordinary Meeting of Council
4	13 April 2016	Post-Election Meeting of Council
5	27 April 2020	Post-Election Meeting of Council

*This policy may not be current as Council regularly reviews and updates its policies. The latest controlled version can be found in the policies section of Council's intranet or Website. **A hard copy of this electronic document is uncontrolled.***



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1. PURPOSE

Set clear guidelines to define the roles and responsibilities of the Mayor and Councillors as spokespersons for the portfolios of Council.

Assigning Councillors as Portfolio Spokespersons ensures:

- the workload associated with being an elected member is shared across all Councillors;
- the Councillor's individual skill, knowledge and background is utilised by linking them to an area of interest;
- the community can identify which Councillor to approach according to the strategic issue at hand;
- informed discussion is generated by the whole of Council;
- Councillors act as sounding boards for strategic issues and suggestions from senior officers, members of the public, and other Councillors relating to their portfolio; and
- Councillors are reporting back to the community.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Councillors of Western Downs Regional Council. However, the Mayor acts as spokesperson for the whole of Council.

3. POLICY

3.1 Background

The functional areas of Council are divided into distinct portfolios, each with strategic objectives and strategies designed to achieve long-term success for our region.

At the beginning of a new term of Council the Council will assign each Councillor as spokesperson for one portfolio. Portfolios may be reviewed as Council deems appropriate.

3.2 Policy Guidelines

The following guidelines define the role and responsibility of Councillors acting as Portfolio Spokespersons for Western Downs Regional Council.

1. This policy should be interpreted so that its purpose or objective is achieved.
2. While performing his/her role as Portfolio Spokesperson, a Councillor must act in accordance with Council's Acceptable Request Guidelines - Council Policy and section 170 of the *Local Government Act 2009* and must not direct, or attempt to direct any employee about the way in which the employee's duties are to be performed. The Mayor may give a direction to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with section 170(1) and (2) of the *Local Government Act 2009*.
3. In the role of Portfolio Spokesperson a Councillor must ensure he/she accurately represents the view of the whole of Council rather than their own personal view.
4. To ensure that due consideration is given to each portfolio of Council, Councillors are required to study the whole meeting agenda paying particular interest to reports contained within their assigned portfolio.
5. Councillors are responsible for being fully informed of issues reported on within their assigned portfolio at Council meetings. Conducting further research may be necessary including engaging with the community and requesting further information from Council Officers in accordance with Acceptable Request Guidelines - Council Policy.



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6. The Mayor acts as spokesperson for the whole of Council and is therefore Council's primary media representative. However, where appropriate Portfolio Spokespersons may also act as Council media representatives working closely with the Chief Executive Officer and/or relevant General Manager to formulate appropriate media approaches and responses. In this capacity Councillors are expected to be available where possible for media engagements.
7. Councillors will be invited to represent Council at meetings and functions held by community, industry and professional groups. Any public comment by Councillors on behalf of Council should be consistent with Council's strategic direction. If the comments are a personal view, they must be clearly expressed to represent a personal view and not the official view of Council.
8. Portfolio Spokespersons must report back to Council any feedback received from the community significant to strategic and/or future planning issues.
9. Portfolio Spokespersons must direct operational enquiries received from the community through the appropriate Council channels in accordance with Acceptable Request Guidelines - Council Policy.



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Schedule: Current Councillor Portfolios as adopted at Post-Election Meeting 27 April 2020

Portfolio	Portfolio Definition	Portfolio Spokesperson
Executive (Mayor)	Disaster Management, Economic Development, Internal Audit, Communications and Marketing	Cr. P.M. McVeigh
Finance, Corporate Services and Business Strategy	Finance, Governance, Business Planning, Saleyards and Health Services	Cr. I.J. Rasmussen
Works and Technical Services	Civil Works, Fleet, Quarries, Asset Management and Design	Cr. O.G. Moore
Utilities	Water, Wastewater and Gas	Cr. P.T. Saxelby
Strategic Communication and Council Facilities	Strategic Communications, Council Facilities (Aerodromes, Sporting Facilities, Showgrounds and Community Buildings).	Cr. M.J. James
Planning, Environment and Agribusiness	Statutory Planning, Development and Compliance, Environment and Health, Waste, Rural Services and Agribusiness	Cr. A.N. Smith
Tourism, Events and Regional Promotion	Council and Community Major Events, Tourism Attraction and Regional Promotion	Cr. K.A. Bourne
Community and Cultural Development	Libraries, Community Development, Cultural Development and Community Services	Cr. K.A. Maguire
Recreational Spaces and Cemeteries	Parks, Open Spaces, Gardens and Cemeteries	Cr. C.T. Tillman

